

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 CIEP-02

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FEA-02 FPC-01 H-03 INR-10

INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07 RSC-01 SAM-01

SCI-06 SPC-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00 SAB-01 PA-04 PRS-01

USIA-15 DRC-01 /170 W

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R 121711Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2987

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 2132

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR VE CU PQ

SUBJECT: UNEXPECTED CALL ON PRESIDENT-ELECT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ;  
VIEWS OF NEW PRESIDENT ON PETROLEUM, CUBA AND PANAMA  
NEGOTIATIONS

1. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, WILLIAM LUERS, FORMER  
POLITICAL COUNSELOR IN CARACAS, IS A PERSONAL GUEST OF  
PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ AT THE INAUGURATION CEREMONIES.  
ON MONDAY, MARCH 11, WHEN LUERS CALLED ON THE FUTURE MINISTER OF  
STATE FOR INFORMATION CONSALVI AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE  
TRANSITION OF AD, CONSALVI IMMEDIATELY TOOK HIM TO SEE THE  
PRESIDENT-ELECT. THIS WAS AN UNEXPECTED EVENT WHICH LUERS  
FOUND IMPOSSIBLE TO TURN DOWN. I HEARTILY APPROVE HIS MEETING  
WITH THE NEW CHIEF OF STATE.

2. DURING A CONVERSATION OF ABOUT 20 MINUTES THE DAY BEFORE  
HIS INAUGURATION, CAP APPEARED RELAXED, CONFIDENT  
AND IN GOOD SPIRITS. HE SAID THAT HE HAD PROMISED THAT IF HE  
BECAME PRESIDENT, HE WOULD INVITE LUERS TO THE INAUGURATIONS;  
AND THIS IS A DEMONSTRATION THAT HE IS A MAN OF HIS WORD  
AND WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT.

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3. ON PETROLEUM, CAP SAID THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTINUE FOR THE NEXT TEN YEARS WITH THE CURRENT ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE PETROLEUM COMPANIES, AND SOME CHANGE WOULD BE NECESSARY. YET HE HOPED THAT THE FIRST STEP WOULD BE A CONCRETE PROPOSAL FROM THE PETROLEUM COMPANIES AS TO WHAT NEW ARRANGEMENT WOULD BE POSSIBLE, THEN HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD REACT TH THIS PROPOSAL AND BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE COMPANIES. WHEN ASKED WHAT ROLE HE SAW THE US GOVERNMENT PLAYING, CAP REPLIED THAT HE THOUGHT THEY WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE US GOVERNMENT; HOWEVER, THE MAJOR NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE WITH THE PETROLEUM COMPANIES.

4. ON CUBA, CAP SAID FLATELY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE NO UNILATERAL STEPS TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH CUBA. HE DID, HOWEVER, SAY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD LOOK FOR A MULTILATERAL MEANS OF CHANGING RELATIONSHIP WITH CASTRO GOVERNMENT IN VIEW OF THE CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE HEMISPHERE SINCE THE TIME WHEN VENEZUELA PROPOSED THA SANCTIONS AGAINST CUBA. HE REAFFIRMED STRONGLY, HOWEVER, THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT VIOLATE THESE SANCTIONS UNILATERALLY.

5. CAP CURIOUSLY ENOUGH OPENED THE CONVERSATION AFTER THE INITIAL PLEASANTRIES WITH HIS EXPRESSION OF SATISFACTION WITH THE STEPS THAT THE US GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUES OF PANAMA CANAL. HE SAID THIS WAS A SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD IMPROVING THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE UNITED STATES WITH VENEZUELA AND OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. HE SAID HE HAD A PARTICULAR INTEREST IN PANAMA SINCE TORRIJOS OWED HIM A FAVOR AND THEY CONSIDER THEMSELVES FRIENDS. HE SAID ABOUT TWO OR THREE YEARS AGO A COPEI DEPUTY NAMED RAFAEL CLARINZIO GONZALEZ PEREZ HAD TAKEN STEPS TO GET COPEI SUPPORT FOR SOME COLONELS WHO WANTED TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT OF TORRIJOS. WHEN CAP LEARNED OF THIS, HE ACTED THROUGH THE MILITARY TO STOP THIS DEVELOPMENT. TORRIJOS LEARNED OF THIS AND FEELS INDEBTED TO CAP FOR HIS STRONG INTERVENTION WITH THE VENEZUELAN MILITARY AND THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT. CAP SAID THAT TORRIJOS HAD URGED CAP TO GO TO PANAMA TO MEET SECRETARY KISSINGER. HOWEVER, CAP FELT THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN AN INAPPROPRIATE OCCASION TO MEET THE SECRETARY. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE SAW HOPEFUL SIGNS NOT  
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ONLY IN THE DEVELOPMENTS WITH REGARD TO THE PANAMA CANAL BUT ALSO WITH REGARD TO THE MEXICO CITY FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING.  
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## Message Attributes

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